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THE HOME-MAKERS

A Play of the Pilgrims
in Three Acts

BY

M. B. VOSBURGH

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PRICE, 30 CENTS

NEW YORK
Samuel French
Publisher
28-30 West 38th Street

LONDON
Samuel French, Ltd.
26 Southampton Street
Strand



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PS635
.29V758

The First Act

The *Mayflower* in Plymouth Harbor. Looking toward the new home. The morning of Sunday, January 14, 1621, *Old Style*.

The Second Act

At home with the Pilgrims in Plymouth. The morning of April 5, 1621. Elder Brewster's home.

The Third Act

The departure of the *Mayflower*. A new England:—for better for worse. The afternoon of the same day. The same home.

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THE PERSONS IN THE PLAY

GOVERNOR JOHN CARVER—over 50 years of age.

MISTRESS KATHERINE CARVER—his wife.

ELDER WILLIAM BREWSTER—about 55 years.

MISTRESS MARY BREWSTER—his wife.

WRESTLING BREWSTER—13, } their sons.

LOVE BREWSTER—11,

WILLIAM BRADFORD—31.

EDWARD WINSLOW—26.

CAPTAIN MILES STANDISH—36.

JOHN BILLINGTON—from London.

ELLEN BILLINGTON—his wife.

JOHN BILLINGTON—12, } their sons.

FRANCIS BILLINGTON—10, }

MISTRESS SUSANNA WHITE—25, and her infant
Peregrine, born early in December.

PRISCILLA MULLINS—about 17.

MARY CHILTON—about the same age.

SQUANTO—probably over 30.

REMEMBER ALLERTON—about 10.

MARY ALLERTON—younger than her sister.

CAPTAIN JONES—Master of the *Mayflower*.

THOMAS—an English sailor.

MARTIN—another sailor.

DRESS OF THE CHARACTERS

The men wear dark coats with white neck-bands, knée-breeches, and long stockings. Governor Carver also wears a long, full cape. Captain Standish is dressed like a Dutch soldier, with cordovan leather boots, corselet, and helmet, and sword and musket. All the men have their hair cut short. Captain Jones and the sailors wear the gay dress of Elizabethan seamen.

The women wear ankle-length skirts and plain, long-waisted bodices of dark blue, brown, gray or purple. In the First Act, their large white kerchiefs are topped by smaller ones which are tightened snug around the throat by a necktie and bow; on their heads are dark silk or velvet caps or hoods. In the Second and Third Acts, their kerchiefs are open at the neck, and their caps, aprons, and turned-back cuffs are of white linen or cambric. Remember and Mary wear dresses patterned like the women's, but of gayer colors, perhaps violet and dark red.

The boys wear coarse smocks and soft felt hats. The boys' parts could be played by girls.

The Home-Makers

ACT I

SCENE. *The middle deck of the Mayflower, at anchor in Plymouth Harbor. At the R. of the spectator rises the high poop deck with two low doors, which open aft into the passengers' quarters: at the L., a similar wall of the high forecastle where lived the crew. Connecting the walls are open railings about three feet high, both front and rear of the stage. The deck is clear except for a coil of rope at the R., an empty hogshead, two or three stools, and a boat-hook. A new day is dawning.*

THOMAS, a fat, hearty sailor, lies dozing on a coil of rope with a lighted lantern beside him. From the forecastle, MARTIN comes on deck, chilled by the cold air.

MARTIN. Rouse up, Thomas. Day is dawning. The wind's brisk——

THOMAS. (*Drowsily*) Ay, Martin! 'Tis bitter January weather——

MARTIN. (*Looking off*) Any camp-fires of the savages?

THOMAS. Not a sign o' life.

MARTIN. They may be warming themselves by their prayers this Sunday morning, like our pas-

sengers. Strange no natives of this place have yet appeared.

THOMAS. Ay, but wait till they do come; they'll come with a whoop! or else steal up on you without a sound,—and cut off your joints,—and broil 'em on the coals——

MARTIN. Oh, wake up, Tom, you are dreaming—— The fields where the natives have gotten corn show it must have been inhabited four or five years ago.

THOMAS. (*Rising and blowing out the lantern*) Ay, all the fitter to turn these Planters and their goods ashore and leave 'em; it is time we were done with 'em.

MARTIN. Ready to put to sea again, Thomas?

THOMAS. Ay, glad I'll be when we weigh anchor and point the *Mayflower* toward England. (*Rising and coming forward*) We have had enough of this. When we go to land, we wade in icy water up to our knees; then it's (*Mimics sneezing*) from the poop, and (*Mimics coughing*) from the forecastle till you'd swear we were the great choir of St. Paul's practising the Te Deum. (*Business of sneezing and coughing*) If we go inland, we march through one prickly wood after another. When we complain of being torn to pieces with the boughs and bushes, Zounds! back we travel to plod through the sea-sands till we are out o' breath. And not a drink o' beer ashore to comfort us.

MARTIN. Why, man, we were looking for fresh water!

THOMAS. And me, a-dreaming of a tavern in Southampton. These mad passengers may follow the deer-tracks to the springs, if they will, and drink the drink of beasts. I am a mariner of old England, I am, and I want my beer. (*The sailors straighten out the coil of rope*)

MARTIN. (*Moodily*) There would be more aboard for us sailors if our captain had not played the host on Christmas Day.

THOMAS. That paid, Martin, that paid, to see next day the faces of the poor wretches who spent Christmas felling timber ashore when we told 'em their companions who stayed aboard had beer a-plenty for once this winter. (*Laughs*) Their faces were as solemn as on Saturday at sundown.

MARTIN. Was't not Christmas night they heard the noise of Indians?

THOMAS. Ay, marry it was. I stick to the ship from now on. Scarce as the beer is and poor as be the victuals, I'll fill my friendly belly with anything save Indian arrows.

MARTIN. I'll be hanged if I wouldn't sooner be baptized by a Bishop than scalped by an Indian. I'm a loyal subject of our Sovereign Lord King James, and England is good enough for mé.

THOMAS. Amen to that.

(REMEMBER and MARY ALLERTON *peep out from a door of the poop and run on deck, glad to be free from restraint. The sun rises as the children frolic*)

REMEMBER. When's breakfast? I'm hungry.

MARY. So am I.

REMEMBER. (*To MARTIN*) Can't I have a biscuit?

MARTIN. Have you said prayers?

REMEMBER. Yes, we've had all our prayers—

MARTIN. Then you've had enough to last you awhile.

MARY. Oh, I wish I had some milk, Remember.

REMEMBER. Why, Mary! what makes you ask

for milk? We have had no milk for four months, not since we came forth from England.

MARY. I know it, Remember. But I do wish I had some. Don't you suppose there may be wild cows in this country?

REMEMBER. Perchance. The men heard lions roaring one night.

MARY. (*With conviction*)—If there are lions, there are cows.

(JOHN and FRANCIS burst in from the poop)

FRANCIS. I saw a whale. (*The children and sailors hurry to the seaward rail*)

REMEMBER. Where? Francis, where?

FRANCIS. Over there. See?

MARY. Is it a whale? Do whales give milk?

FRANCIS. No, you silly.

REMEMBER. Perchance it does, Mary. You don't know everything, Francis Billington!

JOHN. A whale, a whale!

(*The two BREWSTER boys rush in*)

WRESTLING. Where? Where? Do you see her, Love?

JOHN. There, Wrestling! There she blows. Oh——!

MARTIN. She's a big un, as heavy as the *Mayflower*, I warrant.

REMEMBER. Alas, she's swimming away!

LOVE. Oh, I wish we had a harping-iron.

FRANCIS. (*To THOMAS*) Why didn't we bring a harping-iron?

THOMAS. Why didn't ye bring a harping-iron to catch whales? Hanged if I know. Why didn't ye bring a small hook to catch herring? And ye

talk about whales! Like father like son! Great fishermen are ye! to live on the seacoast! Why didn't ye bring a net large enough to catch cod? or anything else ye needed! (*The children bombard him in their indignation, while he holds them off, amused at their resentment*)

WRESTLING. We did! We brought everything we needed. We brought meal——

REMEMBER. And rice——

MARY. And butter——

FRANCIS. And powder, and muskets, and cannon——

WRESTLING. And paper for our windows, and cotton yarn for our lamps——

FRANCIS. (*Pounding THOMAS*) Liar!

JOHN. And chests full of tools. Look at our new house——

REMEMBER. And good store of bedding. So, Master Thomas, we did bring what we needed. You pray our pardons.

THOMAS. For the Lord's sake! You brats are as full of ginger as Dutch cookies. Where's your whale gone?

LOVE. It's no bigger now than a blackberry.

THOMAS. That little blackberry has tuns of oil in its belly, enough to make us all rich, enough to light all the lamps in London, ay, and all in Leyden, too. But what o' that? A herring in a platter is worth three whales in the water.

MARTIN. The only herring we've caught was the one I picked up alive on the shore last week, which made a supper for the Master.

FRANCIS. Well, it's out o' sight. (*He pulls REMEMBER by the hair*)

REMEMBER. Stop, Francis.

JOHN. Come, Mary, and be our Honey-pot.

MARY. No, John Billington.

FRANCIS. Who's a 'fraid-cat?

JOHN. Come, we won't let you fall. (JOHN and FRANCIS clasp their four wrists to make a seat. MARY is persuaded to ride with her arms around their necks. They threaten playfully to throw her over the rail on the landward side toward the audience, shouting, "Here she goes!" but she squeals, so they prance on with her and let her down beside her sister)

JOHN. There you are. Safe and sound.

LOVE. Burr—it's cold!

WRESTLING. There's skating on the canals in Leyden, I warrant.

JOHN. Perchance we can get some deer-bones and make skates. That would be merry sport. (All the boys except LOVE withdraw to talk it over. LOVE, MARY, and REMEMBER gaze shoreward)

REMEMBER. I wish we were over there with father in our new Common-House.

LOVE. That is only large enough for some of the men. You women will have to wait till another house is finished.

MARY. I cannot wait with patience, Love.

REMEMBER. I do long to help with our new home. Won't it be joyful, Mary, when spring comes and we can make our own garden? Father brought some of our tulip-bulbs.

MARY. And will we have a cherry-tree?

REMEMBER. (Kissing her) Oh, you sweet honey-pot! I know not.

LOVE. John Alden says the strawberry-vines are thick on Cape Cod. I will make a strawberry-bed for you, Remember. What will you do for me?

REMEMBER. I will get your supper when you go a-fishing. You will bring home an excellent good cod, and I will cook it in the pot. I will dish it up hot and steaming——

MARY. (*Beginning to whimper*) Oh, Remember, if we could only have some *hot* victuals, I'm weary of cold meats.

LOVE. We will, when our houses are built. I'll fetch the wood and we'll make a fire as big as——
(*The other boys notice MARY'S weeping and approach*)

JOHN. What ails you, Mary?

LOVE. She wants some *hot* victuals.

WRESTLING. (*Comforting her*) You know we cannot look for that on shipboard, Mary, not often. Perhaps the Captain will give you a prune.

MARY. (*Trying to cheer up*) You are kind——

REMEMBER. See! I have a string. I will make you a cat's-cradle. Here is the manger where our dear little Lord Jesus was laid by Mary, His mother.
(*She has deftly made a cat's-cradle, and rocks it to and fro*) See, sweet Mary Honey-pot. Take it off, Wrestling.

WRESTLING. (*Removing it to his hands and making the next figure*) Criss-cross-criss-cross.
(*MARY watches, again happy. FRANCIS steals up behind and snatches the string*)

FRANCIS. Just what I need to whip my top.
(*WRESTLING chases FRANCIS to get back the string*) Play tag on iron, Wrestling. Come, Love.

LOVE. We cannot play tag on the Lord's Day.
(*FRANCIS, JOHN, and WRESTLING dodge round the deck, shouting. BREWSTER and WINSLOW enter from the poop to stop the outcry*)

BREWSTER. Boys, boys! Have you forgotten what day it is? This is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God. Let the fear of the Lord rule your spirits and keep you in quiet ways. Thomas, cannot you manage these young scapegraces?

THOMAS. 'Tis all the fault of this Francis Bil-

lington, Elder Brewster. He's a crooked stick. All your preaching won't make him straight, sir.

BREWSTER. God can do much,—in the ten years between boyhood and manhood.

THOMAS. Ever since he came nigh blowing up the ship with gunpowder a month since, I've been on my guard against him. (*He seizes FRANCIS by the shoulder and punctuates each question by a shake*) When I found him lying in a heap in the corner of the cabin, I shook him till he wept, to teach him to mend his ways. Shall I make you pipe again, my lad? Will you scatter powder about the cabin and take your lighted match close to the open powder-keg? And shoot off a fowling-piece to make the women jump? Will you, sir? 'Tis a mercy we aren't all meat for fishes, and the *Mayflower* washing up with the tide in little chips.

WINSLOW. Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child.

BREWSTER. Praise God, there was no harm done. But remember the danger, all of you, and bring no fire again into a room where there is powder, or even our loaded muskets. Go now, and learn the Thirty-seventh Psalm. (*The children go through the poop entrance, the sailors to the forecastle*)

WINSLOW. (*Brooding, in low spirits*) The wind continues.

BREWSTER. But the sun shines, Master Winslow. We will keep the Sabbath on shore as we purposed. I hope for good tidings from the two of our flock who were lost, John Goodman and Peter Brown. They may have found their way back to our plantation.

WINSLOW. Why did they leave the others who were binding up thatch? The ten armed men we sent out yesterday to seek for them did not find them. If the Indians have not surprised them, the

must have wandered all night in the frost and snow with no weapons but their sickle, nor any victuals, and in slender apparel. The wolves would terrify them.

BREWSTER. They are strong and active. They could climb up and take refuge in a tree,—though that would prove an intolerable cold lodging.

WINSLOW. I grieve for them as lost.

BREWSTER. Do not be so downcast, Edward. It may have pleased God so to dispose that the wild beasts came not, or that our people found shelter in the habitation of a savage, or that their two dogs led them safely home. Why should we question His goodness Who has saved us out of all our troubles? Comfort yourself by gazing yonder at our new Common-House. In spite of the foul weather it is finished at last, even to the thatch on the roof. And a great labor it has been, felling the timber, sawing the planks, and carrying them—well—twice round the moat at Scrooby, say, and no post-horses in the stables to haul them in, only our own stout arms. But there it stands secure, a promise of a goodly settlement. Soon we will build two rows of houses and a fair street, like our “hof” in Leyden. On the great hill over there, we will make a platform or fort, and plant our ordnance, which will command all round about. Mount to its summit, Edward, when you are homesick for the Burg at Leyden, and look thence far into the sea. ’Tis the same sea, Edward, and the same sun shining on it, and God above with the same watchful care over us.

WINSLOW. Nothing daunts your courage, Elder Brewster. You pass through fire and water unmoved. Such stress of weather and such villianous sea-sickness make my heart turn with longing to the Library of the University and to our quiet printing of books.

BREWSTER. Not in such peace of mind did I print our Puritan pamphlets, Edward, with the hounds of King James on my heels, and our faithful church hiding me from his fury for a year before we sailed from Delfshaven. But what books can compare with the pages we shall write in this new world!

WINSLOW. You venture to learn a fresh language. I speak and understand only the tongues I know. When I look landward, I see that summer is done. You behold a new heaven and a new earth. I see the country stands with a weather-beaten face. You behold as in a dream Mother Nature smiling in her spring-time of delivery, crooning to an infant nation. I see but a hideous and desolate wilderness full of wild beasts and wild men. And who knows what multitudes there may be! If we look behind us, there is the mighty ocean we have passed, a great gulf separating us from the civilized parts of the world. Which way soever we turn our eyes, there is little help.

BREWSTER. You forget to look upwards to the heavens, our dearest country. There, and in the hearts of our little company, lies all our strength. Whatsoever we have desired and worked to accomplish for twenty years, will be fulfilled in that barren spot marked "Plymouth" on the map of Captain John Smith;—freedom to worship God without interference from Kings or Courts or Priests, and to advance the Gospel of the Kingdom of Christ in these remote parts: freedom to educate and bring up our dear children to larger opportunities than in crowded England, or in Holland where their bodies were bowed under the weight of heavy labor, and we were likely to lose our language and name of English. We are determined to found homes in this new land or die in the attempt. (*Pause*)

WINSLOW. You revive my sinking heart.

BREWSTER. If you sink under these fancies again, go and mix with the children. They possess the pebbles of the faith of David which will quickly destroy your giant Melancholy.

(CAPTAIN JONES *enters from the forecastle. He is a full-bodied, full-blown specimen of a ship's commander, as affable to the ladies as the captain of a Cunarder, as much within his rights in exacting acquiescence from the men. He moves and speaks, sometimes ironic, with the leisure bestowed by long weeks at sea*)

Good morrow, Captain Jones. How soon can we go ashore?

CAPTAIN JONES. When the tide serves, sir. After an hour I reckon. If the harbor were deeper, or the ship were smaller, the time would be shorter. The tide hastens for no man. It is, as it is.

WINSLOW. This mile and a half from the ship to the land is a long pull, Captain, and a tiresome. And no penny paid for the ferry.

CAPTAIN JONES. A long pull, and a strong pull, and a pull all together,—steady there,—use the boat-hook,—we can make as close a landing to the Rock as if my lads were rowing you in the Thames to the Tower Stairs, supposing the King, for his Royal Satisfaction, should fancy to furnish you free lodging behind stone walls.

BREWSTER. (*Smiling*) Such grandeur would ill become humble printers and weavers. Thatch will shelter us.

JONES. A great to-do you land-lubbers make about this mile and a half of water. What's a matter of a mile and a half between husband and wife when there's no shop to buy ribbons? or between

the working-man and his beer when there's naught left but an empty cask? After I weigh anchor, you'll be wishing you had the chance to row that distressing interminable devilish distance of a mile and a half to shore;—and then back again, if I don't miss the mark, that pleasing inviting stretch of salt water,—whether rough or smooth,—back to the shelter of the good ship *Mayflower*, and her gentleman-like, modest, easy-going heretic of a captain!

BREWSTER. Ay, Master Jones, sorry we'll be to see your sail fade in the distance. We will miss a friend indeed. Just at this moment, though, my care is for Governor Carver and William Bradford, who lie sick in the Common-House. It is hard to wait so long to get a message from them. If we had one of the Dutch carrier-pigeons that brought us news while Leyden was besieged by Spanish greed, how quickly we would know of their condition! Man has conquered greatly when he can make the fowls of the air his messengers. The lightning only travels more rapidly, and that no man can guide.

(MISTRESS CARVER enters. *She is silver-haired, sweet-voiced, tremulous. Her height is magnified by a cape falling in straight folds from her shoulders. She keeps her place in a Bible she carries by a finger between the leaves*)

Good morrow to you, Mistress Carver.

MRS. CARVER. Good morrow, friends. (To CAPTAIN JONES) Well, kind sir, when do you give us patient captives liberty to pace the sands instead of these hard boards?

JONES. When the tide is high enough, Mistress Carver, so you poor captives will not have to wade

ashore a bow-shot through shallow water and wet your Sunday finery. It does this old sea-dog good to see his fair cargo so spic and span.

MRS. CARVER. A faithful dog follows his mistress whether she be in fine or poor attire, Captain.

JONES. As we all, rough sea-dogs and four-footed curs, follow at the heels of the gentle wife of our Governor.

MRS. CARVER. Oh, my poor husband! I grieve I cannot go to him at once. I have not slept all this night for fear he might be in pain or distress. Never has he failed in his goodness to me, and now he is sick, I would be by his side. Here come my two comforters.

(MARY CHILTON, a buxom English lass, enters first, with PRISCILLA MULLINS, of a more spiritual beauty, following close)

JONES. Good morning, Mary Chilton, first woman on Plymouth Rock! But Mistress Carver's ahead of you on deck this morning. And Priscilla, sweet child, is not far behind. But Priscilla is first in the heart of a man.

MARY CHILTON. Spare her blushes, Captain. She is as pink as the wild roses they tell about in this new land.

PRISCILLA. Indeed, you may speak for yourself, Mary. *Your cheeks, too, are nipped by this frosty air. (She rubs her cheeks. All laugh good-humoredly)*

BREWSTER. Is not my wife ready for breakfast, Mary?

MARY. Yes, long ago, but Mistress Hopkins is ill and she's helping her with her baby Oceanus. First they take all the clothes out of the chest to find the young man's cap; second, they find it; third, they

put them all back again,—and the cap with them. Well, then it's to do all over again. Oh, here she is.

(MISTRESS BREWSTER *enters with a babe in her arms. She is a wholesome, motherly woman, comfortably middle-aged*)

PRISCILLA. Let me hold Oceanus, Mistress Brewster.

MRS. BREWSTER. Hush, he's just fallen asleep. Hush-a-by. (*She sits on a stool in the middle of the deck and rocks him to and fro. The women gather round her*)

PRISCILLA. (*Admiring him*) The little lamb!

(MISTRESS SUSANNA WHITE, *a frail little woman, pale and pretty, enters, carrying her month-old infant. WINSLOW picks up a stool and places it beside MRS. BREWSTER'S, with a flourish, then gently escorts her to it*)

WINSLOW. Make way for Master Peregrine White, the first Englishman born in New England! and his honored mother!

SUSANNA. Thank you kindly. I'm glad to get out for a breath of air and away from a scolding tongue.

JONES. How now? Is that frothy spouse of Billington at her tricks again? (*SUSANNA assents.*)

WINSLOW. She'd sooner scold than eat and sooner eat than pray.

JONES. I pray the anchor holds till there's a lull in the storm. Then let her sail out into the open. (*He threatens with a boat-hook*)

WINSLOW. I fear a wreck whenever the Billingtons are sighted. I know not by what friends they shuffled into our company. (*The men loiter by*

the seaward rail, chatting. MRS. BREWSTER and SUSANNA cuddle the sleeping infants. MRS. CARVER paces slowly back and forth behind them, reading the Psalms. Occasionally she pauses and quotes or reads. To these women, habituated to seeking and finding comfort in Holy Writ, these interruptions are natural and acceptable)

MRS. BREWSTER. (To SUSANNA) Does your back ache this morning?

SUSANNA. Yes, a little. Every morning. (*The two maidens shove the hogshead behind SUSANNA so she can lean back, then kneel at either side*)

MRS. BREWSTER. Poor soul. Your strength is not yet returned.

SUSANNA. I shall be glad when I'm on shore with my husband. Thanks. Such kindness as you have shown me and my babe this past month since he first opened his eyes in that cold cabin makes me forget all my miseries.

MRS. BREWSTER. Why, we did what we could, Susanna. If we had not shared your fears, how could we now share your joy?

PRISCILLA. For two months on the ship we have been like one big family. Mary and I take courage when we see your bravery, Mistress Brewster.

MRS. BREWSTER. Why, this is nothing. When we left our homes in England and sailed for Holland,—or tried to sail, I should say,—and we women were stranded in the creek while most of our men were carried out to sea by the Dutch captain, I was in great distress. There was I with my three poor little ones hanging about me crying for fear and quaking with cold. You would have melted in tears, Priscilla. All night we had waited in our open boat for the ship to come, and then when it came, with the daylight, we were stuck fast on the ground, at low water. The first boatfull of men was got

aboard, and then the ship-master spied a great company coming our way, both horse and foot, with guns and other weapons, the whole country raised to take us prisoners, so we should not carry ourselves and our goods and money out of the Kingdom without the King's license. The Dutchman, seeing that force coming against us, swore his country's oath, "Sacramento!" and having the wind fair, weighed his anchor, hoisted sails, and away!

PRISCILLA. How pitiful!

MARY. I warrant the men would have given anything to be ashore again.

MRS. BREWSTER. Well, wouldn't you? If you hadn't a change of linen? and scarce a penny? like some of them; their goods being with us.—And afterwards they endured a fearful storm, being seven days when they saw neither sun, moon, nor stars. The mariners despaired of life and cried out, "We sink! we sink!" But with a great degree of divine faith, our men said, "Yet Lord, Thou canst save! yet Lord, Thou canst save!" And the storm abated, and the ship recovered, and the Lord brought them to their desired haven. (*Short pause*)

PRISCILLA. I love to hear you tell the old tales. Tell us what you poor women and children were doing.

MRS. BREWSTER. Why, even the Magistrates with wives and children of their own saw it was unreasonable to imprison so many of us. We were but wives and doing our duty in following our husbands. And to send us home was as difficult, for the truth was, we had no homes to go to.

MARY. Sure, you had sold your homes to make new ones in Holland where you could have Gospel preaching.

MRS. BREWSTER. Well, in the end, they were glad to be rid of us.

SUSANNA. In short, you all stole over to Holland.

MRS. BREWSTER. Ay, some at one time, and some at another. Some in one place, and some in another.

SUSANNA. And now God has led us through the seas——

MRS. CARVER. “Thy way is in the sea, and Thy path is in the great waters, and Thy footsteps are not known. Thou leddest Thy people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron.”

MRS. BREWSTER. It is well for us to be here where we can observe God’s ordinances in safety. My husband rejoices that to-day for the first time we shall keep the Sabbath on shore under our own roof. “There is the House of God. There is the Gate of Heaven.” (*Indicating the Common-House*)

MRS. CARVER. “Lord, I have loved the habitation of Thy house and the place where Thy honor dwelleth.”

MARY. Far more peaceful is it here than in Holland. There, it’s all beating of drums and preparing for war.

MRS. BREWSTER. Oh, it’s war over the whole earth, the Emperor of Germany all the time at war, Louis XIII stamping upon his subjects, and the Spanish already slaves under Philip——

SUSANNA. I don’t know where it’s all going to end.

PRISCILLA. And in England, the Sabbath is profaned by “the sweet-pastime of bear-baiting.” Little Peregrine can sleep quietly far from all that uproar.

SUSANNA. If the savages do not disturb us with their furious cries.

MRS. CARVER. Fear not, Susanna. Hear what the Psalmist says:—“A people whom I have not

known shall serve me. As soon as they hear of me they shall obey me. The strangers shall submit themselves unto me. The strangers shall fade away and be afraid out of their close places."

MRS. BREWSTER. Blessed indeed is our new home. What riches are ours for the taking!

MRS. CARVER. "A little that the righteous man hath is better than the riches of many wicked."

MRS. BREWSTER. Amen say I. But I had in mind the riches of God's bounty and not of man's making. Plenty of wood to warm us, plenty of clear running water for washing our clothes, plenty of sand for scouring. (*Rising*) And land! land! land! land! land for everyone of us!

SUSANNA. Land for this mite of a Peregrine?

MRS. BREWSTER. Land for the oldest and land for the youngest! You and I, Mistress Carver, have lived and toiled for many long years. We are stepping-stones for these young women who come after us, and for their children, to make their paths easy and pleasant—— (*Angry voices are heard within the poop. The women shrink back*)

WINSLOW. What noise?

(JOHN BILLINGTON, *always of rougher deportment than the other Pilgrims, and now slightly inebriated, enters, protecting a bottle. His wife ELLEN follows*)

ELLEN. Give me the bottle, I say——

BILLINGTON. Nay, I have it safe——

ELLEN. Give it here. You've drunk too much already. That's for medicine. What shall I do when my poor joints ache?

BILLINGTON. What shall I do? Go without it?

ELLEN. Bread and beer's enough for a man.

BILLINGTON. (*Sneering*) A woman, forsooth, must have fish, flesh, fowl, and fruit.

ELLEN. Give it here. Your nose is always in the cup.

BREWSTER. Softly, softly. Give me the bottle, Master Billington.

BILLINGTON. Why? Don't meddle with me.

ELLEN. Yes, what right have you to it? It's mine. I need it.

BREWSTER. Are you sick?

ELLEN. No, I'm not sick. Not now. (*Wheedling*) But a good housewife provides before the sickness comes——

BREWSTER. The gin and brandy we must keep as physic——

ELLEN. (*Grabbing for it*) So I said——

BREWSTER. ——in the common store.

ELLEN. There's no rhyme or reason in that. I bought it myself in London.

BREWSTER. Would you rather I take it and keep it, or your husband take it and drink it?

BILLINGTON. I can save it as well as you. What's mine 's mine.

BREWSTER. You make no complaint about having the victuals and beer in common——

JONES. Ay, and you drink more than any mother's son of us! You clam! You mussel! You oyster!

BILLINGTON. (*Threatening him with the bottle*) You scum of the sea! An honest man from London stands no taunts from you.

JONES. Not an inch further! (*He blows his whistle at the forecastle door*) Thomas! Martin! (*They enter in haste*) See to this fool. (*They seize BILLINGTON*)

BREWSTER. Softly, Captain Jones. Master Billington forgets for a minute that we do hold our——

selves tied to care for each other's good. You know, Captain Jones, how hard it is to get even your small crew to agree. People have as many minds as sheep. Billington, you signed an agreement two months ago to agree to such government as we should establish, did you not?

BILLINGTON. In truth, I did. But was there a bottle in the bargain? Nay, nary a bottle in the compact, not even when we signed, worse luck! No bottle mentioned. No, Brewster.

BREWSTER. But obedience is mentioned. And very strong! Where is that compact, Edward?

WINSLOW. Here, in the pocket of my Sunday breeches.

BREWSTER. Read it, I pray you. Skip King James and his titles—— (WINSLOW unfolds several sheets of paper bearing signatures, and reads)

WINSLOW. "We, etcetera, having undertaken for the glory of God, and advancement of the Christian Faith and honor of our King and Country, a voyage to plant the first colony in the northern parts of Virginia, do by these presents solemnly and mutually in the presence of God, and one of another, covenant, and combine ourselves together into a civil body politic, for our better ordering, and preservation, and furtherance of the ends aforesaid: and by virtue hereof, to enact, constitute, and frame such just and equal laws, ordinances, acts, constitutions, and offices, from time to time, as shall be thought most meet and convenient for the general good of the Colony; unto which we promise all due submission and obedience." (BILLINGTON yawns, indifferent)

BREWSTER. Very good. "Obedience" is the tune we march to, obedience to just laws we make ourselves. Let me have the bottle of strong water. If you are sick and need it, you shall have it.

BILLINGTON. (*Sullen*) I'm never sick.

BREWSTER. Or if this is used, and we still have some on hand you shall be considered first. Is not this fair dealing? Speak, sir. (BILLINGTON *shakes off the sailors and gives the bottle to BREWSTER*)

BILLINGTON. Let me go.

JONES. You'll behave?

BILLINGTON. Sure, I always behave. (*He joins his wife forward and straightens his neck band*)

MRS. BREWSTER. (*To the women*) These Billingtons will be the death of me.

JONES. (*To BREWSTER*) So long as you sit at the helm, your flock prospers.

BREWSTER. Yes, but there's a black sheep in every fold. (*He pockets the bottle*)

JONES. Well, I'll swear by the Compact. 'Tis a good chart to sail by.

ELLEN. (*Wrangling with her husband*) Where's your courage? Why don't you stick up for your rights?

BILLINGTON. Never you fear. I'll get even with 'em yet.

ELLEN. Ay, a lot you'll do. Aren't you as good as the next man in this barbarous place? Have you no brains? Don't you want to get on in the world? for the sake of your wife? of your children? Aren't John and Francis as strong, sensible fellows as those two Brewster lads?

BILLINGTON. Stop your babble, woman. If you'd kept your tongue in your head, I wouldn't a lost my bottle.

ELLEN. Twasn't yours! 'Twas mine!

BILLINGTON. Aw——

ELLEN. Well, let that be. When are you going to make a stand? Are you going to let Brewster take the best of everything from right under your

nose? Hm? Either we succeed here or back to England we go.

JONES. (*To BILLINGTON*) Will ye not hold your peace? (*To THOMAS and MARTIN*) Come, lads! breakfast! Bring out the salt meat and ship biscuit. (*Out of the forecastle, the sailors wheel a small keg down to the left, and remove the cover. Then they bring out some wooden bowls and pewter mugs*)

PRISCILLA. (*Calling at the door of the poop*) Children, children. Come. Breakfast.

(*The children troop in. Five or six more may appear. Some settle themselves on the deck beside the women, others go down to the keg*)

CHILDREN. Oh! I'm hungry. Hurry, Tom. Mother, I've learned as far as the twenty-second verse. (*FRANCIS is climbing up the landward rail. His mother clutches him*)

ELLEN. How many times have I told you to keep off o'there? (*She turns her back and joins the group. FRANCIS waits a second, climbs up again, gazing toward land, and waves his hat with a shout*)

FRANCIS. Fire! Fire! Fire! (*The children and sailors laugh at him. The older folk pay little heed, "'Tis only FRANCIS."* His mother turns and starts for him. He quickly jumps down)

ELLEN. What mischief are you up to now?

FRANCIS. (*Shifting toward the other children*) I say 't is fire. Truly! Look! (*He points landward. The other children gaze, then cry in great excitement*)

CHILDREN. Yes, see! Fire! Fire! See the sparks! Oh! (*All rush to the rail. Commotion!*)

BREWSTER. (*Much moved*) Our house!

WINSLOW. (*Groaning*) Full of men!

LOVE. The roof is burning.

THOMAS. With this wind, the whole house will be ablaze soon—like a tinder-box.

MRS. BREWSTER. The savages! Think you they've set it afire?

SUSANNA. (*Moaning*) God help us!

WINSLOW. Our men that were lost, Peter Brown and Goodman, the savages must have caught them. Thus they learned that most of our men were sleeping there last night. So they attacked.

SUSANNA. God help us! My husband!

MRS. CARVER. Alas! my husband. Sick! Scarcely able to move. (*Beseeching the CAPTAIN*) Let us go to them. Let us go to them.

JONES. Dear Mistress Carver. It is impossible.

MRS. CARVER. Surely, surely, now the water is high enough?

JONES. (*Shakes his head*) There is no remedy. (*Short pause*)

MRS. CARVER. Prisoners! We are prisoners! while my husband dies.

MRS. BREWSTER. We've been prisoners before. Pray, pray.

MRS. CARVER. (*Raising her Bible*) "My heart is like wax. It is melted within me. Hear the voice of my supplication."

BILLINGTON. Oh, Heavens!

ALL. What? Speak.

BILLINGTON. Doesn't each man keep his musket at the head of his bed? loaded?

WINSLOW. Against surprise by Indians, yes.

BILLINGTON. If the fire reaches the powder, they'll be blown to pieces.

FRANCIS. Yes, Father. I know! I know! See the flames!

SUSANNA. God! (*She is distraught*) My little

child! My baby! Thy father perisheth in the flames and thou art left an orphan in the wilderness. (*She hesitates a second, staring wildly about, then rushes to the seaward rail with intent to jump overboard*)

MRS. BREWSTER. Quick, quick! She's going to throw herself into the sea. (WINSLOW and CAPTAIN JONES catch her and assist her to the pile of rope where she sinks down. WINSLOW kneels beside her. PRISCILLA takes PEREGRINE. MRS. BREWSTER passes OCEANUS to MARY and soothes SUSANNA)

WINSLOW. Thank the Lord we were in time. Thou art too precious to lose thy life, Susanna.

JONES. (*Who has come forward; to BREWSTER*) Thank my stars, she didn't get overboard. Bradford's wife being drowned last month was excitement enough.

BREWSTER. Blessed be God. Is the fire increasing? Man is born unto trouble as the sparks fly upward.

WINSLOW. I believe 'tis the thatch only which is burning. 'Tis dying down. The roof stands.

JONES. A spark from their fire on the hearth may have kindled the thatch. No doubt they used too much beechwood. That scatters sparks like spray in the spring tides. Well, the men will have their work to do all over again. They'll be mad as hornets.

MRS. CARVER. "The voice of the Lord divideth the flames of fire."

CHILDREN. Yes—'tis smoking now. Yes. The thatch is burnt up. The fire is almost out.

BREWSTER. (*Calling joyfully to his wife*) The fire is quenched, Mary. Our house is saved.

MRS. CARVER. (*Putting her arms round some of the children*) Can you see any men moving about?

CHILDREN. No.

MRS. CARVER. Any Indians? Look among the trees.

CHILDREN. No.

BREWSTER. Perchance if all is well, they will beat the drum for morning prayers as usual.

WINSLOW. Yes. They would sleep late this morning. The search party came home late yesterday, and weary—— (*A distant roll of a drum is heard. BREWSTER raises his hand for silence, then removes his hat and stands with bowed head. The men follow his example. All give silent thanks*)

REMEMBER. (*Breaking the silence*) Then the Indians will not get them.

FRANCIS. Then the muskets did not explode. (*All laugh. The strain is over. The men replace their hats. The sailors fill the bowls with biscuit, helped by the children who take a nibble on the sly. MRS. BREWSTER is solicitous about SUSANNA*)

MRS. BREWSTER. Do you still feel faint, Susanna?

SUSANNA. Yes—a little.

MRS. BREWSTER. William, quick, come here. (*All but the sailors and children gather round*) She is faint, poor soul. She had a wretched fright. That bottle—(*BREWSTER has forgotten it*)—that bottle of Billington's.

BREWSTER. Why, yes, truly, here it is. (*He draws it from his pocket*)

MRS. BREWSTER. Give her some. (*WINSLOW picks up one of the mugs and pours in some gin*)

BILLINGTON. There it goes.

BREWSTER. Have you any objections, Master Billington?

BILLINGTON. (*Still surly*) No.

ELLEN. I feel faint, too. (*She flops down. All smile, but ignore her hint*) Can't ye help a body?

JONES. I have no objection to *Mistress White* having some this time, but I have two objections to the strong water. (*All stare at him in amazement*)

MARY. Why, Captain Jones!

JONES. Firstly, 'tis too dear. Secondly, there isn't enough to go around. (*Laughter. The children pass the bowls of biscuit and boxes of beef. ELLEN calls them back for a double helping. The sailors jest as they cover the keg*)

MARTIN. The Lord saved the roof.

THOMAS. The Lord let the thatch burn.

MARTIN. What had He, think you, against the thatch?

THOMAS. The roof was wet as our hull before the thatch was put on, and the twigs dry as straw. Well, the men will be back to the ship and to our beer-casks to-night, hang 'em. I'll be sworn they set it afire on purpose.

MARTIN. What these folk don't know about muskets! Scarce one has ever handled a piece. If the men could get out o' the burning building, could they not take out the muskets?

THOMAS. Ay, they'd have been dead from the heat by the time the muskets shot off. But what man in his wits will lie like a Yule-log while the sparks fly round him!

JONES. (*Who has joined them*) Ay. But they show an infinite patience in a deal of misery. Put away the biscuit. (*The sailors roll the keg into the fore-castle. The CAPTAIN follows them. Mean-time—*)

MRS. CARVER. Alas! Our first home in the new land is destroyed.

MRS. BREWSTER. Nay, say not destroyed. That the roof is burnt is nothing.

MARY. Soon that will be repaired.

PRISCILLA. The first was built well. The second

will be better. (ELDER BREWSTER, affectionately drawing one of his sons to his embrace, raises his hand. The other Pilgrims kneel, the men hatless)

BREWSTER. My son—— Let us ask a blessing—— Our Father in Heaven, we thank thee for this food for our bodies, and beseech Thee to sustain and strengthen our souls. Give us faith to build homes for ourselves and for our children's children,—for Thy truth endureth to all generations. Amen.

The curtain falls slowly during the last phrase

ACT II

At Home with the Pilgrims in Plymouth. The Morning of April 5, 1621.

SCENE. *The interior of the Common-House, the home of GOVERNOR CARVER and ELDER BREWSTER. The walls are of logs stuffed with clay, the floor of boards uncovered. The door, a little to the right of the center of the rear walls, hangs on heavy iron hinges. A small window at the left of this door, and another in the center of the left wall, are made of oiled paper. Beneath the first window, pegs are driven in the wall, on which rests a board for a writing-table. One of the four stools in the room stands before it. A large, solid chest stands at the right of the door. The wall above it is furnished with wooden pegs, from which hang garments of various sorts and sizes. A large fireplace breaks the right wall, the hearth of trodden earth. On the fire is a pot, and skillets and trivets are at hand; also firewood and a broom made of brush. A small plain mirror hangs from the wall. Between the chest and fire stands a flax-wheel. At the right of the fireplace, a narrow shelf holds brass and pewter candle-sticks. Beneath stands a lectern bearing a large open Bible. A stool is at the extreme right. In the left furthest corner is a bed of planks made up invitingly with*

quilts, pillows, and fine linen. Against the left wall are two trestles and boards resting on the floor, which, put together, make a table. At the left of the window, a simple dresser of narrow shelves and slats holds pewter plates, mugs, wooden-ware, boxes, and the GOVERNOR'S trumpet. Well forward stands a bench constructed by laying a board across two small trestles.

Before the curtain rises, a babble of childish voices is heard, studying aloud. At rise, MRS. CARVER sits on the stool at right, knitting; the four boys stand facing her; the two girls sit on the bench at left, swinging their legs, reading the syllables from their hornbooks* which hang by strings from their necks. The boys are reciting from memory. MRS. BREWSTER stands folding quilts and laying them neatly on the bed.

MRS. CARVER. Quiet, lads! Now, Remember, say the vowels.

REMEMBER. A, E, I, O, U.

MRS. CARVER. Go on.

REMEMBER. A b ab, e b eb, i b ib, o b ob, u b ub; a c ac, e c ec, i c ic, o c oc, u c uc; a d ad, e d ed, i d id, o d od, u d ud; a f af, e f ef, i f if, o f of, u f uf—— (The girls are standing to recite. FRANCIS finds a small piece of bark and flicks it over at REMEMBER. MRS. CARVER reaches for the birch rod beneath her stool and threatens him)

* These early primers may be reproduced by a five-inch oblong wooden paddle with a two-inch handle pierced by a hole. On a four-inch oblong of paper covered with isinglass to represent "horn,"—such as was used in the lanterns,—and fastened down by quarter-inch imitation leather passepartout, is printed the alphabet, syllables, and the Lord's Prayer.

MRS. CARVER. Well done. Now, Mary, your babebibobu.

MARY. (*Singsong*) B a ba, b e be, b i bi, b o bo, b u bu, ba be bi bo bu.

MRS. CARVER. Good. Are you sure you know your A B C?

MARY. Oh, yes, ma'm.

MRS. CARVER. Good.

"He that ne'er learns his A B C
Forever will a blockhead be."

Now, lads, we'll try some spelling. Let us see if you have learned the five-syllable words I gave you yesterday.

REMEMBER. May I try? I know the syllables.

MRS. CARVER. Well, stand in line; toes on the crack. (*MARY stretches out on the bench, taking care not to fall off. REMEMBER joins the boys, the order being LOVE, FRANCIS, REMEMBER, WRESTLING, JOHN*)

FRANCIS. Remember cannot spell these 'long words, Mistress. Give her something easy.

REMEMBER. I can indeed.

MRS. CARVER. Peace! Love, spell Purification. (*The children spell in turn, correctly, but with some hesitation, dividing the words into syllables*) Francis,—Abomination. Correct.—Remember, spell this that I keep for giving bad boys a trouncing. Birch. Correct.—Wrestling, spell, um—Mortification. Good. John, Humiliation.—Now, Love, pay attention, Edification. Toe the mark. (*They straighten their line*)

LOVE. Edification, e d ed, d e edde—

MRS. CARVER. Wrong. Go to the foot. Francis.

FRANCIS. What, ma'm?

MRS. CARVER. Spell the word.

FRANCIS. What word?

MRS. CARVER. Don't you know the word? Answer your teacher.

FRANCIS. Forsooth I have forgot.

REMEMBER. "Edification!"

FRANCIS. Edification. E d ed, d i edi, f e fe—

REMEMBER. *I know, I know.*

MRS. CARVER. Francis, go to the foot. Now, Remember, see if you can stay at the head.

REMEMBER. Edification, e d ed, i edi, f i edifi, c a ca, edifica, t io n, edification.

MRS. CARVER. Bless your heart. That's all, Remember. (*REMEMBER goes back to the bench*)

REMEMBER. I stayed at the head, Mary.

MRS. CARVER. Now, boys, where is your birch-bark for writing out your sums?

BOYS. (*Excusing themselves*) Yesterday it drizzled all day. April showers—wet the bark. We didn't fetch any wood from the forest.

MRS. CARVER. Till to-morrow then. Where is my sum-book?

MRS. BREWSTER. (*Taking it from the desk*) Here it is. (*The boys play at the fire.* MRS. BREWSTER *detains* MRS. CARVER *as she looks at the title-page*) How long ago was this printed? Oh, only about twenty-five years. "London, 1596."

MRS. CARVER. I sigh over this arithmetic. I never was strong in it.

MRS. BREWSTER. You are better on accounts than any of us other women. And the men can't spare time for sums, what with sawing clapboards to send back to pay our debts in England, and building our houses, and ploughing our fields—

MRS. CARVER. Alas! Well, boys. Toe the mark. We'll do some sums in our heads. 10 and 5 and 2 and 4 and 8 are how many? (*Pretending to count stitches with her knitting needle, she is really adding the numbers as she gives them out*)

FRANCIS. 29.

MRS. CARVER. That's right. Isn't it, Wrestling?

WRESTLING. Yes, ma'm. Give us some larger numbers.

MRS. CARVER. Well—100 and 300 and 100 and 569. How many is that, Wrestling?

WRESTLING. 1069, ma'm.

MRS. CARVER. Did all you boys get the same answer?

BOYS. Yes, ma'm.

MRS. CARVER. Then it's correct. Now Wrestling, can you say the multiplication table of 12?

WRESTLING. (*Teasingly*)

"Multiplication is my vexation,
And division quite as bad,
The Golden Rule is my stumbling stool,
And practice makes me mad."

(*Laughter*)

MRS. CARVER. Wrestling! What will your mother say?

MRS. BREWSTER. (*Pretending not to be amused*)
She'll say, you'd better warm the birch.

WRESTLING. (*Going to her and putting his arm round her*) Oh, Mother dear, I know the table, but I said that to make you laugh. You are so sad these days.

MRS. BREWSTER. (*Kissing his brow*) My big son! The winter has been a hard one. The sickness has saddened us all. And I miss thy sisters so far away.

WRESTLING. Your elbow is so sharp now, Mother!

MRS. BREWSTER. (*Trying to make merry*) All the better to prick you with when your father preaches.

MRS. CARVER. Well, here's the rhyme you are learning about the days of the month. All say it

together. Come, Mary. (*They say it in a loud sing-song.* MRS. CARVER, *with her arm round MARY, marks time with her rod*)

ALL. "Thirty days hath September,
April, June, and November.
February eight and twenty alone,
All the rest thirty and one."

MRS. CARVER. Now we will close our lessons with a prayer. God make us worthy of our manifold blessings. Amen. Now you have leave to play awhile.

REMEMBER. Boys, play London Bridge with Mary and me.

BOYS. No, we want to go out to play tag.

REMEMBER. Oh, pray do. A little while. (*Boys consent. She whispers to MARY. They join hands and lift their arms as the file of boys march under, all singing the old tune,—“London Bridge is falling down, my fair lady.” They catch LOVE first, lead him one side and ask him*)

GIRLS. Which had you rather, a pig or a monkey?

LOVE. Pig! pig, by all odds. You can't eat a monkey.

REMEMBER. Mary's the Pig. Go behind Mary. (*They repeat the march till the game ends with a tug-of-war. BREWSTER, without a coat and carrying a hatchet, enters while the frolic is going on and waits indulgently for its close*)

BREWSTER. Judging by the noise, school is over and 'tis time for my class in Latin. So, boys, to the woodpile with you, where we will hew wood and Latin verbs together. And if we saw wood in Latin, we will fetch water in Dutch. For we must not forget our foster-language. Some day we may be trading with Dutch neighbors along the Hudson.

BOYS. Yes, Father. Yes, sir.

MRS. CARVER. See you are as diligent to learn as the young gentlemen, both Danes and Germans, he taught in Holland. Show him that English boys can learn as well as those sons of foreign men.

Boys. We will. Yes, ma'm. (*They scamper out*)

BREWSTER. One day with the children is much the same as any other day. They play London Bridge in Cheapside, or London Bridge in Leyden, or London Bridge here on the edge of the world, it's all one to their merry hearts. (*He goes out*)

MRS. BREWSTER. And one day is much like another with housewives. Now the quilts are aired and folded, I have time to scour pewter before dinner. (*She goes to the pot and gives it a stir, then sits to polish pewter. REMEMBER and MARY sit on the bench doing some simple sewing*)

MRS. CARVER. (*Examining their work*) Those are excellent small stitches, Remember. Mary, thy stitches go up hill and down dale. Make them straighter, child. Our little maids must be fine needle-women. Take care not to prick thy fingers.

MRS. BREWSTER. For the sake of the linen! (*Laughter*)

MRS. CARVER. Ay, thrift is needful—— (*Merry voices are heard outside and a rat-a-tap on the door*)

MARY CHILTON. May we open?

MRS. BREWSTER. Come in. I know your knock, Mary Chilton. (*MARY and PRISCILLA, feet bare, skirts pinned up, fling the door open. Each carries a basket and hoe, and glows with the self-reliance of a modern farmerette*)

MARY. No, dear Mother Brewster. Priscilla and I stop but for a moment to leave you a basket of mussels for your supper. The tide is low so we have been on the beach digging, these two hours.

MRS. CARVER. Come in, come in.

PRISCILLA. Nay, our feet are wet. We will soil your floor.

MRS. BREWSTER. What matters! What's a floor save a path for friendly feet! Come in, my daughters.

PRISCILLA. Nay, Mother Brewster, came I in 'twould be but to kiss you. And that would breed jealousy, for here's Captain Jones on our track. *(She puts her basket inside the door and stands aside as JONES enters)*

JONES. Good morrow to you all. I'm still here, you see.

MRS. CARVER. *(Drawing a stool forward)* Rest awhile, Captain.

JONES. Are the men at home?

MRS. CARVER. Nay, the Governor is in the forest.

MARY CHILTON. The Elder is at the woodpile. I'll to him.

REMEMBER. Pray, can't we go with them?

MRS. CARVER. Yea, put up your sewing, and run and stretch your legs.

MARY ALLERTON. Good. Priscilla, wait, I entreat you.

REMEMBER. Wait for us. Mother Brewster, may we go to the edge of the woods and get some strawberry-leaves for the pot?

MRS. BREWSTER. Yes. Run along. *(The four go out)*

JONES. I shall miss visiting this home of yours, so little like my cell of a cabin. My ship is a beehive, cell upon cell, where the visitor sees naught but the little space wherein he stands. This house of yours, being all open, and where I see all your belongings at one view, is a bird's nest. 'Tis as if you presented me with the keys of the city, say the

keys of Flushing which were committed to the charge of Elder Brewster in his early journeys by the Ambassador of the Queen. Once inside your door, and all ceremony's over. Many a fine mansion I've seen as I've tumbled about the world, but this is a house that is a home. (*BREWSTER comes in with an armful of logs. He looks back*)

BREWSTER. Hail, Bradford. Captain Jones is here. Come and join us. (*He drops his logs on the woodpile. BRADFORD appears with a bucket of water which he sets beside the door*)

JONES. Good morrow to you, Elder, and to you, Master Bradford. When I came in, I had but a word for you, but when I start to talk, I talk by the yard. Your pardon, Mistress, if I am tiresome.

MRS. CARVER. You always hit the nail on the head.

JONES. My word then is this. The wind has begun to shift.

BRADFORD. And you will leave us.

JONES. For three days all has been in readiness to hoist sail. But for three days, the wind has not favored us. Even now I may not read the signs aright. But granted a fair wind, we shall weigh anchor.

MRS. CARVER. When you take leave of us, London Bridge will seem a long way off.

JONES. I'll give you due notice ere I leave. But have your letters ready. (*He goes. BREWSTER takes some letters from the desk and joins his wife, who is seated on the bench*)

BRADFORD. Often have we sat by this fire of a cold winter evening and talked of our first letters to our friends. Then it seemed a long time ahead before we could send news. Now comes the long, long time of awaiting their answers. Would it were possible to know what agitation for our Cause has

taken place in England since our removal, and which of our friends have been harried by the King or perchance even now at blows with him.

MRS. BREWSTER. Alas! (*Short pause*) Our dear daughters, Fear and Patience, must have had their hearts and thoughts already on this side, with six months or more of waiting for a word from us.

MRS. CARVER. Fear and Patience they were well named, Mary.

MRS. BREWSTER. Ay, *their* waiting has been the harder part, with no news of our safe arrival. I praise God I taught them to pray, to pray constantly, that their faith may not be shaken.

BRADFORD. You have not told them of the sickness by which half of our company have died? Forty-seven gone this winter.

BREWSTER. No. I cannot bear to burden them with our discouragements. I will read what I have said to my son Jonathan. "When so many have died, and so many yet languish, myself and dear wife and sons are yet living and in health, and do hope that our days of affliction may soon have an end. We have met with many sad and discomfortable things, a scarcity of beer——"

BRADFORD. Why do you object to that? You drink nothing but water.

BREWSTER. Billington and his followers will write that the water is not wholesome.

BRADFORD. If they mean not so wholesome as the good beer and wine in London which they so dearly love, we will not dispute with them. But add,—for *water*, it is as good as any in the world, and wholesome enough to us that can be content therewith.

BREWSTER. "A scarcity of beer and bread——"

BRADFORD. There again. Two-thirds of all Billington and his cronies eat is bread, so there is little

left. They wail they are starving when they are forced to eat turkeys and venison, clams and oysters.

BREWSTER. (*Reading again*) "Howsoever our fare be but coarse in respect of what we formerly had, yet the Lord makes it so sweet to us that I may truly say I desire no better."

MRS. CARVER. Nobody amongst us was of higher estate than you, Elder Brewster. And if you can get along without the capon and cider, and endive and cheese that made your dinner at Scrooby Manor, why so can we.

BRADFORD. If we have Indian corn enough, we may live plentifully. Corn will save us!

BREWSTER. (*To his wife*) Have you your letter finished for Fear and Patience?

MRS. BREWSTER. Ay, William. (*She draws it from her kerchief where it was hidden over her heart*)

BREWSTER. What did you add last night? (*To BRADFORD*) She is always adding a few words. (*MRS. BREWSTER unfolds the letter and reads the end, trying pitifully to control her emotion*)

MRS. BREWSTER. "I long for the time when I may see thy sweet faces again, my dear daughters. I look forward to your coming over to join us, and though the passage be many, many weeks, I trust that God who hath so graciously preserved us hitherto will bring us to see each other with abundance of joy. I praise God I want nothing but thee." (*She begins to weep*) "So I kiss my dear daughters——" (*She breaks down utterly and hides her face on her husband's shoulder. He embraces her tenderly*)

BREWSTER. Mary, sweetheart, my best beloved. (*BRADFORD is affected and bows his head in his hands. MRS. CARVER approaches him*)

MRS. CARVER. What ails thee, good Master Bradford?

BRADFORD. This painful separation! Those dear to me! My young wife lies beneath the waves, my sweet Dorothy May—and our little son John far away in Leyden——

MRS. CARVER. Have you writ him to come to you?

BRADFORD. No. What would he do here without his mother? We had planned to make a home for him. But now—— Better it might be for us both if I returned in the *Mayflower* and forgot my plans for our future in this Plantation.

BREWSTER. Bradford, did I hear aright? You talk of leaving us?

BRADFORD. I have looked at the matter from all sides. All sides alike are dark.

BREWSTER. My friend, my friend! The Lord knows how dear thou art to me. Why, William, thou art my right hand. What could I do without thee?

BRADFORD. There are other men who can hew wood and fish and trade better than I.

BREWSTER. Thy wisdom is worth more than many cargoes. For years, since thou camest to our church at Scrooby, a pale, weak lad, I have taught and cherished thee, William. Do not forsake me now I am old.

BRADFORD. So few of our company are left in this vale of tears! Must we pass through hell to heaven?

BREWSTER. Is it not enough that we here enjoy Jesus Christ? What would we have more? I thank God I like so well to be here as I do not repent my coming. If I had foreseen all these afflictions, I would not have altered my course. Shall not these young men be as strong as their Elder?

BRADFORD. You rip up my heart.

BREWSTER. We need leaders in this wilderness. Will you faint now, or make a place for your son to stand? (*A knock at the door. MRS. CARVER opens it. BILLINGTON enters with a hoe*)

MRS. CARVER. Good day, Master Billington.

BREWSTER. How now? Do you feel the call of the spring-time to go a-gardening? Good.

BILLINGTON. Not so, Elder. I'm on my way to get bait to go a-fishing. I saw your beds airing in the sunshine, Mistress Carver. I warrant ye are glad to get 'em out o' the house. 'Tis as if the graves on the hill were always under your eyes. (*He marches gloomily around the room*) Here laid Mistress Mary Allerton and here she said a long good-bye to little Mary and Remember. Here Mistress Elizabeth Winslow breathed her last, and here by the window little Peregrine looked for the last time on his father. Here Priscilla kissed her father and mother and brother farewell for their long journey and Mary Chilton's mother left her, too, alone in the world. Pleasant memories you nurse by your fireside, Mistress Brewster!

MRS. BREWSTER. Mistress Carver and I have nursed our dear friends with such strength as was granted us, Master Billington, and with no help from you. Are not two faithful women as strong as one fault-finding man? Did you make the fire for the sick? or cook their food? or wash their clothes? or make their beds?

BILLINGTON. Nay, that I never did in my own home, not even in London,—

MRS. BREWSTER. Pity about you.

BILLINGTON. And I came to this land for greater liberty.

BRADFORD. Seneca says: "A great part of liberty is a well-governed belly and to be patient in all

wants." So I wish you a string of fish, but if you have no luck, have patience. (*BRADFORD passes out with BILLINGTON as WINSLOW and SUSANNA WHITE enter gaily. She carries her baby wrapped in a blanket. The call of the spring-time, "the only merry ring-time," has her in thrall*)

SUSANNA. A merry April day, Mistress Carver.

MRS. CARVER. You are like a primrose yourself, Susanna.

WINSLOW. There's a promise in the air this morning.

MRS. BREWSTER. (*Peeking at PEREGRINE*) And how's little Master Cowslip?

WINSLOW. Lusty as a lambkin.

MRS. CARVER. Sit thee down, friends. (*SUSANNA, with her back to the audience so the baby is hidden, sits on the bench. WINSLOW sits sidewise and regards her tenderly. MRS. CARVER knits. MRS. BREWSTER stirs the pot. BREWSTER goes to the desk to add to his letter*)

WINSLOW. Mistress Carver, you take the air too little. You put me in mind of a tortoise who seldom peeps out of her shell.

MRS. CARVER. That is the proper emblem of a woman who should be a keeper at home.

WINSLOW. (*Making eyes at SUSANNA*) Would I had such a keeper.

MRS. BREWSTER. Do you call a creature who lives in a shell a home-maker?

SUSANNA. Home is not home without a man at the head of the board. My little sprig of a Peregrine, many a long year ere thou canst go a-fowling to fill the platter.

WINSLOW. (*More and more enamoured, addressing the infant with baby-talk*) Does he want to use Master Winslow's big musket and shoot

a robin-redbreast? Did he hear the pretty robin sing this morning?

BREWSTER. (*Humorously*) The time of the cooing of doves is come.

WINSLOW. (*Taking down the trumpet and dangling it before the babe*) When he's a big boy, he will sound the Governor's trumpet. But Massasoit, the great Indian king, when he tried it, could make but a squeak. Much he marvelled at it, and so did his followers Samoset and Squanto.

SUSANNA. You would spoil the babe if he were yours. (*She takes PEREGRINE to the bed and stays beside him till SQUANTO'S entrance*)

MRS. CARVER. Methinks the child would rather play with one of the fat eels that Squanto caught for our dinner, but Nan has put them in the pot.

WINSLOW. You keep your house extraordinarily clean. Nan must be a good maid-servant.

MRS. CARVER. Yea, she's used to all kinds of work but she is grown insolent in this free country.

SUSANNA. I saw her scrubbing the sheets as we entered.

MRS. BREWSTER. Yes, has she finished, I wonder. (*She goes to the door and looks out, calling*) Nan, your washing's not done. Why are you loitering?

NAN. (*Outside*) By the same token that your head's out o' doors.

MRS. BREWSTER. You've got such a head that it's insufferable.

NAN. You may stay long ere you meet with a better.

MRS. BREWSTER. Set the empty tub out o' the sun. It will crack.

NAN. Do it yourself.

MRS. BREWSTER. Now, husband, you can see for yourself——

SUSANNA. I would send her away, if this were Holland.

MRS. BREWSTER. I dare say she'll leave,—on the *Mayflower*.

MRS. CARVER. She's my servant. Let me answer her. Surely she will not use such language to me. (*Calling*) Nan.

NAN. Yes, yes.

MRS. CARVER. Nan, remember the verse of the Psalmist I taught thee:—"Make thy face to shine upon thy servant, and let not any iniquity have dominion over me."

NAN. Hm! You overflow so with the Bible that you spill it on every occasion. You will not cudgel your maid without Scripture!

MRS. CARVER. (*Hastily retiring from the door*) I fear she is troubled with the Divil.

WINSLOW. It is a question if she is more troubled with the Divil or the Divil with her.

MRS. BREWSTER. I would hire some other body, but there is no one, unless Squanto——

BREWSTER. Squanto is still here, though Massasoit and all the other savages are gone away. Never should we have learned to catch eels with our hands but for him. I hope he remains, for we need to be taught what the inhabitants have learned from the grave Mistress, Experience. We are but strangers.

WINSLOW. He is an instrument appointed from on high to serve us. The ways of the Almighty are past finding out. He is the only surviving native of his tribe that lived here, and had he not been enticed on board that English vessel seven years ago and carried to Spain, he might have perished by the plague with all his people.

MRS. BREWSTER. Now he is returned, we must make him feel at home again.

WINSLOW. When I went with him the other day to parley with Massasoit, I could not have made myself understood save for him. He is of great value as an interpreter. Besides, we are scarcely a handful in comparison to the forces the savages might gather together against us. They might easily swallow us up.

MRS. CARVER. Would it not be well to give him some token of our good will?

BREWSTER. Ay, truly. Since he has been with us this past fortnight, he has served us well. (*A knock.* MRS. CARVER *opens the door.* SQUANTO *enters, a tall, straight, handsome Indian. His face is clean-shaven, his complexion like a Gypsy, and his hair hangs to his shoulders, but over his forehead it is gathered like a fan, broadwise, and fastened with a feather. He wears long leather leggins and tight, short trousers, and a deerskin. He carries an Indian basket, a foot or more across, filled with dead leaves. He raises his right hand, impressively, the greeting of a friend, and stands observant. BREWSTER advances to him and offers to take the basket*) Come in. Welcome, Squanto.

SQUANTO. (*Presenting his gift to MRS. BREWSTER*) For squaw.

MRS. BREWSTER. (*Regarding the leaves dubiously and not taking the basket*) The basket is beautifully wrought. I thank you, Squanto. Is it,—er—eels? (*SQUANTO lifts a handful of leaves and scatters them. SUSANNA, who is leaning forward, sniffs appreciatively*)

SUSANNA. What a sweet scent! (*SQUANTO grunts and scatters more leaves*)

MRS. BREWSTER. (*Sniffs*) Oh, 'tis a fragrance to comfort the heart. (*SQUANTO pushes the leaves apart and holds up a bunch of arbutus*) What do you call it?

SQUANTO. Our children call it neen-wonckanet-namen.

MRS. BREWSTER. Our children will never call it that.

MRS. CARVER. (*Admiring it*) The scent stirs the heart like the touch of baby fingers. It is sweet as the May in the hedgerows of England. Our children will love it. They can call it the May-flower!

MRS. BREWSTER. (*Giving each woman a blossom and accepting the basket*) Our first flowers in the new land! You are kind, Squanto, to bring them. We did not look for flowers so soon.

SQUANTO. Thick in the woods. I know where to find. (*BREWSTER has taken a showy earring from the box on the dresser, and approaches SQUANTO*)

BREWSTER. Squanto, here is a jewel to hang in your ear. Its mate we gave to Massasoit's brother. (*He fastens it in SQUANTO'S ear. SQUANTO regards himself in the mirror, greatly pleased*)

SQUANTO. I like. Ahhe, yes. Warm day, woods warm, Squanto dry. I want drink.

MRS. BREWSTER. (*To WINSLOW*) Give him to drink, I pray you.

MRS. CARVER. (*Taking from the dresser a maple bowl skillfully fashioned*) Use the Governor's bowl he had from Samoset. (*WINSLOW fetches the bucket of water and pours some into the bowl held by MRS. CARVER, which she then offers to SQUANTO. He motions it away, makes a bowl of his hands, one curved within the other, and signifies that WINSLOW is to pour water into them*)

SQUANTO. Water. (*He raises his hands and drinks from his wrists. MRS. CARVER offers the bowl to BREWSTER, who shakes his head, gets water from WINSLOW, and follows SQUANTO'S way of drinking*)

BREWSTER. No newfangled ideas such as bowls. We must learn to love the simple life, like Diogenes.

MRS. CARVER. (*Drinking from the bowl*) You always learn your lessons first. (*WINSLOW puts the bucket in the corner, SUSANNA hums to the babe. SQUANTO admires his jewel in the mirror. BREWSTER shakes his hands to dry them. MRS. BREWSTER stirs the pot*)

MRS. BREWSTER. The hodge-podge is nearly ready. You men might set the table, an 't please you. (*BREWSTER and WINSLOW bring forth the trestles and lay the boards across them, one end near the desk*)

BREWSTER. (*Examining a trestle*) This is out of kilter. Where's the hammer? (*He drives in a nail or two. MRS. CARVER brings a linen cloth from the chest, and, with SUSANNA'S help, lays it, and puts on the pewter and wooden-ware. SUSANNA picks up the baby*)

MRS. CARVER. Stay, neighbors, and take pot-luck with us.

SUSANNA. Nay, thank you kindly. I have porridge at home.

BREWSTER. I'll call in the children, wife.

WINSLOW. May I walk with you, Susanna? (*BREWSTER, WINSLOW, and SUSANNA go out*)

MRS. BREWSTER. So that is how the land lies!

SQUANTO. Squanto get out too.

MRS. CARVER. Nay, Squanto. Tarry awhile. The Governor's house is home to you.

MRS. BREWSTER. Poor soul, he has no other. (*SQUANTO goes to the bench, picks up and examines the trumpet*)

MRS. CARVER. (*Looking out of window*) Mary, that tub still sets in the sun.

MRS. BREWSTER. Well, if servants weren't as

rare as lemons, I would—— (*She goes out, MRS. CARVER follows her, leaving the door open*)

MRS. CARVER. And some of the linen must be dry. (*SQUANTO investigates the trumpet. Now he is alone, this is the chance to try it without making a fool of himself. What a glittering toy! If he blows at the large end, no sound repays him. But a manly effort at the mouth-piece, O rapture! a squeak responds. A tremendous breath, an unearthly note, consternation! BILLINGTON appears, and, seeing the Indian alone, enters, and prudently shuts the door*)

BILLINGTON. Ho there! So 'tis Squanto, my fine trumpeter!

SQUANTO. You think me a child to play with toy. (*Putting trumpet down*) I hear the King's beefeaters blow it in London. I never try before.

BILLINGTON. Ay, London. What can one not hear there? All sorts of merry goings-on. Here all the days are working-days. Perchance I'll get a holiday—the day I die. I'm sick of it.

SQUANTO. You want to go back?

BILLINGTON. Ay, Squanto, my fine buck, that I do. I dare swear that you, too, would gladly return to the house of John Slany, Merchant, and spend your days in Cornhill. Ay, and your nights, too. There honest men like us could walk to the alehouse in safety with the lanterns brightening each doorway. Here we blink at the fire awhile and then to bed.

SQUANTO. (*Shaking his head*) People too many in London. Like blades of grass. (*Throwing out his arms*) Here is room.

BILLINGTON. Ah, Squanto, you rogue, you are Great Man here. We English lean on you. We believe all you say. Is it not so?

SQUANTO. Ahhe, yes.

BILLINGTON. You talk to your people for us. Is it not so?

SQUANTO. Ahhe.

BILLINGTON. You are our tongue.

SQUANTO. Ahhe.

BILLINGTON. You are our eyes. You see the deer for us in the forest. Is it not so?

SQUANTO. Ahhe.

BILLINGTON. And the fish in the streams. Without you we would be helpless. Save for one thing. Do you know what we keep locked in the storehouse yonder?

SQUANTO. No, no sir.

BILLINGTON. The plague. (SQUANTO *shrinks away*) I hold the key. (*He mysteriously draws a key from his pocket*) With this I can unlock the plague to kill my enemies.

SQUANTO. Many white mans died this winter.

BILLINGTON. Ay, enemies of mine. But was I sick? or my wife? or my sons? Nay, none of us. Be my friend, Squanto. See you do as I tell you. As I am a true man, I swear I will not send the sickness on you. But you must help me to go back to England, or beware! Did not all your people perish by the plague?

SQUANTO. Ahhe. I alone am left.

BILLINGTON. Then this soil was yours, these waters yours. Why should they not be yours again? Will you not be King?

SQUANTO. Me be King here?

BILLINGTON. Ay, some day the English leave. This country is unfriendly to us. I want to go back. And many others think as I do. We have little grain left. Why should we stay here to starve?

SQUANTO. (*Regarding him gravely, trying to sift the matter to the bottom*) Mistress Billington want to go back, too?

BILLINGTON. Ay. These prim people are forever prying into her affairs.

SQUANTO. Yes, I hear her scold, scold, scold—scold—scold, like a red squirrel.

BILLINGTON. (*With slow insinuation*) If this fire were Squanto's, Squanto would be well here. King!

SQUANTO. King! King of what? All my people gone. I am English. I sit at white man's table, eat white man's food, learn about white man's God. White man give me presents. (*Shows earring*)

BILLINGTON. If the white men go, as go they must, sooner or later, you can get your Indian friends to settle here. See, I give you presents. (*He takes a handful of cheap trinkets from his pockets*) In England, I'll have no use for them. And if we all go, we leave behind us our homes, palaces for your friends, all of you can live like Kings. Then Squanto would be no more alone. King Squanto!

SQUANTO. (*Proposing to take the trinkets which BILLINGTON retains*) What you want me to do?

BILLINGTON. Ere many suns have set, the *Mayflower* will sail. Why should she not take back this handful of strangers on your shores? Tell our English companions the Indians will come again to till these fields. Tell 'em that as the ice leaves the streams, they must leave these lands. Tell 'em the Indians will not endure their presence longer, that if they stay, they will be driven back into the forest. (*Short pause*)

SQUANTO. Why not *you* tell 'em?

BILLINGTON. I do tell 'em. They will not believe me.

SQUANTO. If they will not believe their white brother, how they believe me, poor Indian?

BILLINGTON. Why—they fear you and your peo-

ple. (MRS. BREWSTER and MRS. CARVER come in, BILLINGTON signals a warning to SQUANTO with the key and sidles out. The women bring in clean linen which they put away in the chest. They stand to crease the sheets MRS. CARVER has carried over her shoulder)

MRS. CARVER. "Dry sun, dry wind,
Safe bind, safe find."

MRS. BREWSTER. If Billington would blow that trumpet and blow and blow, and blow himself up like a bladder till he burst, 'twould be good rid-dance. And his wife's a haughty body, a sloven for all I know. Never will she let me inside her door.

MRS. CARVER. Mary, this sheet needs mending.

MRS. BREWSTER. Yes, put it one side. We can't buy new every day in this town. (*The little girls run in with bunches of strawberry-leaves. They go confidently to SQUANTO*)

REMEMBER. For the pot.

BREWSTER. (*Entering*) Dinner ready?

MRS. BREWSTER. Ay, ready to dish up.

BREWSTER. (*Going to her affectionately*)

"Good cook to dress dinner, to bake and to brew,
Deserves a reward, being honest and true."
(*He kisses her*) Where are the boys? I called them long ago. Have we to wait for them again?

MRS. BREWSTER. (*Cheerfully*) Ay, that we have. Again and again. Your father waited for you, I'll be bound, and they'll wait for their sons. Boys are always the same, from generation to generation, and, unless I miss the mark, so be men and women.

CURTAIN

ACT III

The Departure of the *Mayflower*

A new England

For better for worse

SCENE. *The same as in Act II, though the tablecloth has been removed. It is the afternoon of the same day. SQUANTO lies on the floor before the fire, dozing. MRS. CARVER holding her knitting, is taking forty winks. MRS. BREWSTER is sweeping up the dry leaves. Enter WINSLOW in haste.*

WINSLOW. *The Mayflower is about to sail. (MRS. BREWSTER bows her head on the handle of the broom and stands motionless. MRS. CARVER, a bit bewildered from her sudden awakening, goes to the window and looks out. SQUANTO sits up, attentive)*

MRS. BREWSTER. When?

WINSLOW. Captain Jones is just coming ashore. He called to me from the shallop. Where is the Governor?

MRS. CARVER. Here he comes. How now, husband? (GOVERNOR CARVER, wearing a dilapidated hat and shirt, bursts in, a hammer in his hand)

GOVERNOR CARVER. Jones says he's coming to say farewell. I'll bring him here to get our letters. We must receive him in state. Is the house swept and garnished? Where's my hat? We must be ready. (*Excitement; he chooses a habit and hat that do not fit*)

MRS. BREWSTER. Then the hour is come. (Go-

ing to the hearth) Where's the turkey's wing? Brush up, I pray you, Squanto. (*SQUANTO tidies the hearth*)

GOV. CARVER. (*After his wife has made him presentable*) Hold, wife, I can do alone.

MRS. CARVER. I do wish that your habit, to command double respect, I wish it were topped by a neck-ruff.

GOV. CARVER. Sh! I'm not to sit for my portrait. (*He looks anxiously into the mirror, then steps to the door, where he turns about*) Oh, should I not wear my belt and sword, think you?

MRS. CARVER. Oh, my dear, I had forgot them. Pray wait a minute. (*She fetches them from the chest and fastens them for him*) Now you are in brave attire.

WINSLOW. A doublet on his back, a hat upon his head, mark how clothes create a governor!

GOV. CARVER. I thank you, my love. I will return shortly with the Captain. Have all in readiness. (*He departs*)

MRS. CARVER. Oh, they may ask for music. Take the trumpet and follow, I pray you. (*WINSLOW takes it and goes, leaving the door open*)

MRS. BREWSTER. Let us trim up the house.

MRS. CARVER. Here is my mother's carpet. (*From the chest they take a heavy green cover and spread it over the table. MRS. CARVER reverently places the Bible in the center. They put on a pair of candlesticks and a pewter platter. The roll of a drum is heard and soon the trumpet joins in. Martial music at a distance. MRS. CARVER takes off her apron, shuts the chest, and goes to the flax-wheel. MRS. BREWSTER straightens her cap before the mirror. SQUANTO gazes into the fire*)

MRS. BREWSTER. (*Kindly*) Well, Squanto, my friend——

SQUANTO. (*Pondering*) "If this fire were Squanto's, Squanto would be well here."

MRS. BREWSTER. But this fire is the Governor's and yet Squanto is well here. For, mark you, Squanto, if this fire were yours, you would have the burden of fetching the wood.

SQUANTO. Ahhe, it may be so.

MRS. BREWSTER. And being Governor means being a Joseph unto whom the whole company repairs when their corn fails them. Such a Governor makes his own private purse to be the public, not by sucking into it, but by squeezing out of it. Ay, as Luther says, "A Governor is a target at which the world and the Divil shoot all their darts." Trust me, Squanto, my friend, myself and you are well off as it is. (*SQUANTO shakes his head and sits on the stool at the extreme right in deep thought, his face hidden.* * *The first stanza of the ancient Dutch hymn, "We Gather Together to Ask the Lord's Blessing," softly sung, indicates the approach of the procession which enters singing the second stanza, louder.* GOVERNOR CARVER leads in a dignified manner and takes the head of the table. He invites CAPTAIN JONES to a position at his right, and CAPTAIN STANDISH at his left. BREWSTER follows JONES, and WINSLOW stands beside STANDISH. BRADFORD takes a position beside WINSLOW. BILLINGTON, followed by ELLEN, looks for SQUANTO and goes over near him. SUSANNA finds an opening near WINSLOW. MRS. BREWSTER crosses to her husband. THOMAS, carrying a leather bag, and MARTIN stand on either side of the door. Other sailors may be introduced,

* The singing may be omitted. This "Prayer of Thanksgiving," octavo 12,836, is published by Oliver Ditson Co., Boston, at ninety-six cents a dozen, or it may be had of the Pilgrim Press, Boston, in "Freedom and Peace," at six cents a copy.

also other Pilgrims, men, women, and children, to the number of twenty or thirty. The children pile in with an air of expectancy. The BREWSTER boys go to their parents, the BILLINGTON boys go to theirs. REMEMBER and MARY run to MRS. BREWSTER, who tells them to sit quietly like good children on the bench. PRISCILLA and MARY CHILTON, their arms entwined, enter. The little girls beckon frantically for the young women to join them. They go to them but refuse to crowd on the bench. At the close of the third stanza, "O Lord Make Us Free," sung at full volume, the music stops)

GOV. CARVER. My friends, you are welcome all. The hour of parting approaches. It is not given us to foresee the future, but we cannot fail to look back and marvel at God's mercy in our preservation. Our beginning has been difficult, our profit small. Not that we consider profit to be the main end of what we have undertaken, but the glory of God and the honor of our country. But it is meet to offer it for your consideration, for rare it is to find Religion and Profit jump together. Captain Jones, thou wilt be questioned by many for reports on our condition. Wilt thou tell them truly that it is here as with him that walketh London streets? though he be in the midst of plenty, yet if he lack means he is not better off by the sight of what he wanteth but rather has his sorrow increased. As, for example, it may be that in England rent and firing are so chargeable that a man cannot pay without great difficulty. Never considering that here, where we have no rent to pay, so he must build his house before he have it. And peradventure he may, with more ease, pay for his fuel there, than he can cut and fetch it home here, though here is no scarcity, but rather too great plenty.

JONES. You would have me discourage those who strain for their passage hither?

CARVER. Nay, only those who undertake it with too great lightness.

JONES. They would plunge themselves into a sea of misery.

WINSLOW. (*Quickly*) Nay, nay, do not discourage such as would come to us with contented hearts, such as can work and drink water and go without delicacies. (*Looking at BILLINGTON*) *Some already* among us have their mouth full of clamors. Can any be so simple as to conceive that the fountains should stream forth wine or beer? or the woods be like butchers' shops? or the rivers like fish-mongers' stalls?

JONES. Fish! do ye not yet know what wealth ye have before your doors? (*Great interest*)

BRADFORD. Speak, friend.

JONES. Fish in incredible abundance! Cod in March, April, May, and cod again in September, October, and November to make Cor Fish or Poor John. And out of their bellies, I have taken herring. But indeed the herring are in numbers like the hairs of our heads.

STANDISH. They seem to me but a contemptible commodity.

JONES. (*Affronted*) Why, Standish! and you a soldier of Holland! Who doth not know that the Hollanders, chiefly by fishing, are made a people so mighty, strong, and rich, as no state but Venice is so well furnished with so many fair cities, goodly towns, strong fortresses, and that abundance of shipping and merchandise, that would you but take the profit on your coast, I do engage my head you would all die rich men. But I entreat your pardons, I am too tedious.

ALL. No, no, nay.

BREWSTER. Fish would return an honest gain.

CARVER. When our eye was upon Virginia, and I got the Secretary of King James to beg his favor, His Majesty asked what profits might arise. It was answered, "Fishing." To which he replied, "So God have my soul! 'tis an honest trade. It was the Apostles' own calling!" So if His Majesty praised it by Gospel, shall we consider it too mean for us? Say on, good sea-captain.

JONES. (*Leaning across the table to STANDISH, ironic*) Well, my wise land-captain! what say you to the army Holland has long maintained by sea and land in spite of one of the greatest princes of the world?

STANDISH. (*Testy*) A taste of that army, sir, should prove to you its worth.

JONES. Ay, Captain, I owe it admiration. (*STANDISH subsides, partly appeased*) Look you, then, this same army, and ships that sail east and west, north and south, ay, about the world, are maintained by the selling of this poor commodity. Their fish, they exchange for other goods as poor,—for wood, pitch, tar, rosin, cordage, flax: and such like, again exchanged with the Spaniards, French, Portugals, and English, return as gold, silver, pearls, diamonds, silks, velvets, and cloth of gold. And never could the Spaniard with all his mines of gold and silver, pay his debts, his friends, and army, half so truly, as the Hollanders still have done by this contemptible trade of fish!

BRADFORD. This is a mine *we* can work, let us but get the machinery.

MRS. CARVER. I am not too old to spin a thread to catch them.

LOVE. Nor I too young to hook them.

BRADFORD. (*Eagerly*) Tell the merchants, good Captain Jones, see they fail not to send us nets, lines, hooks, and salt.

JONES. Ay, that I will.

BREWSTER. Your counsel, though welcome, Captain, is tardy.

JONES. Ay, but I came to transport a colony, not to govern it. Are your letters ready?

CARVER. Yea, we will gather them together. (*A general movement. CARVER and BREWSTER take their letters from the desk, some draw them from their pockets. STANDISH, whose letters are thrust through his belt, throws them into the pewter platter on the table. WINSLOW takes the platter and collects. He goes first to SUSANNA. They stand aside*)

WINSLOW. (*Tenderly*) I hope you have not writ your heart into these letters, Susanna.

SUSANNA. (*Coquetting*) I hunted for it to put in, but it was lost.

WINSLOW. If I track it and find it, must I return it?

SUSANNA. I offer no reward, sir.

WINSLOW. Then findings shall be keepings, Susanna. (*She smiles consent. He makes the round of the room. MRS. BREWSTER draws her letter from her kerchief and kisses it*)

ELLEN. Would we were going instead of the letters.

BILLINGTON. Hold your peace. (*He approaches SQUANTO, who stirs a little, but appears lost to the world*)

BRADFORD. I have writ to my boy about the safe return of Peter Brown and John Goodman when they were lost, and how the two wolves sat on their tails grinning at them. I hope *that* (*With a sigh*) will make him merry.

WINSLOW. (*Scrutinizing the addresses*) Our beloved minister, John Robinson, will get a packet of news.

CARVER. Hast thou the letters, Winslow?

WINSLOW. Yes, Governor.

JONES. Thomas, I put them in your charge.

THOMAS. Ay, ay, sir. (*THOMAS steps forward and rests his bag on the table. The GOVERNOR and WINSLOW carefully place the letters within. It is a simple scene, but a solemn, this sending the first news from the Pilgrims back to the old home. More than one of the men finds a lump in his throat, and some of the women wipe away silent tears. CAPTAIN JONES gruffly tries to break the tension*)

JONES. Well, we take leave. Well, Mistress Carver, give a thought now and again to your faithful sea-dog. Well, Priscilla, what will cheer me on a gray morning when I look for your rosy cheeks?

PRISCILLA. When you reach England, the roses will be waiting.

CARVER. Priscilla, dear maid, once again and for the last time, I must ask if it would not be a right course for thee to return to England, all thy family being here buried, and thou left homeless.

PRISCILLA. (*Brokenly*) I do wish you could see my heart and how all its treasures are here.

MRS. BREWSTER. (*With a motherly embrace*) Rest thy heart, dear child.

CARVER. And thou, Mary Chilton, thou art left an orphan by this lamentable sickness, but thy married sister would hold out open arms to see thee restored to her from these perilous shores.

MARY CHILTON. (*Bravely*) Priscilla and I have been knit together in our sorrow. We will stay and comfort each other. (*Gaily*) Besides, if Priscilla and I return at the first chance and our history is

ever writ, would not the writer say, "The wives were fain to stay with their husbands, who held them to their duties, but the maids, look you! fled back to England and showed neither courage nor constancy!" and so all women should stand condemned through us.

STANDISH. Great Cæsar! No Roman matron showed a braver spirit.

BILLINGTON. (*Taking SQUANTO roughly by the shoulder and speaking in his ear*) Awake, Squanto. Look to what I told you. (*He menaces him with the key*) Awake, I say. (*SQUANTO stirs, then rises stately. He has not slept; he is animated by a spirit outside himself. His expression is rapt, his eyes luminous. BILLINGTON draws back a pace or two, amazed. The company waits, impressed, expectant. He speaks as in a trance*)

SQUANTO. I speak what the white man would hear. (*BILLINGTON is uncertain. SQUANTO raises his arms in supplication*) Kiehtan, help me.

BREWSTER. (*Awed*) The Great Spirit speaks in him.

SQUANTO. The English have carried this my body, to and fro over the earth. Once have I been taken to Spain, twice to England, thrice here to Patuxet, mine own Patuxet. (*BILLINGTON is reassured*) Always my spirit stay here in my own home. But my people, the great Pokanokets, boasted they were so many Kiehtan could not kill them. But the hand of Kiehtan fell upon them and they died on heaps, and the crows picked their bones and skulls. (*Short pause*) Now comes the English here. You are few. Dare you travel into the forest, into the enemy land of the Narragansetts?

BREWSTER. Yea, we fear not the natives. Where there is true love, there is no fear.

SQUANTO. But if the Wampanoags come to you? Dare you trust them? Massasoit tell Governor in eight or nine days, he and his people come on other side of brook and dwell there.

CARVER. With them, we have made a treaty of peace and love, and we will keep it.

SQUANTO. If they keep it not? If they want white man's house and white man's tools? Twice Captain Dermer's great white bird sailed to Cape Cod, and Squanto, his friend, with him. Twice the Indians broke with him and fought him. Twice Squanto saved his life. Now Squanto's Captain has gone to Kiehtan, far westward, and Squanto has come home. When your Captain and his white bird sail away, fear you not Indians fight and take back their land?

BILLINGTON. Ay, what he says is true! I fear greatly——

STANDISH. Governor Carver, if any *man* wishes to return to England when the *Mayflower* hoists sail, dismiss him. We want no whipped curs who show fear.

BILLINGTON. If we were not few and feeble,—if the *Speedwell* had not sailed back to London——

BRADFORD. God's Good Providence! What of it, if our small number like Gideon's army, was divided? Perchance the Lord thought these few too many for the great work He had to do.

BILLINGTON. Who could blame us if we now leave this barren shore?

BREWSTER. Bare as it is, here we have founded our homes and here in Christian faith we shall abide. And as we keep faith with God, our deliverer, so we must keep faith with our brethren in Leyden. For they have promised that they will come to us as soon as they are given opportunity.

WINSLOW. And did we not promise to help over

such as are poor, and old, and willing to come?

BRADFORD. Ay. Besides, let us pause and consider what other poor people may have their eyes fixed upon this venture of ours, being discouraged in their own land, and looking to a more goodly country to feed their hopes. (*Pause*)

BILLINGTON. Shall our children feed, and thrive, on the sand and mussels of this coast? (BREWSTER *turns away in distress*)

BRADFORD. Man does not live by bread alone. Have we not all been hungry and thirsty and weary? But have we not all been held together by such love as is seldom found on earth? Be of good cheer, William Brewster. Our children shall praise the Lord who hath sustained us on this day. This day when the *Mayflower* hoists sail for England and leaves us Pilgrims here, shall be long remembered. Men will tell their sons in old England and in new England, too, that not one of us who had put his hand to this planting looked back. (BILLINGTON *bows his head in shame*) Thus may our children's children have courage to be steadfast in their undertakings. May not and ought not the children of these fathers rightly say, "Our fathers were Englishmen which came over this great ocean, and were ready to perish in this wilderness, but they cried unto the Lord and He heard their voice, and looked on their adversity." (BILLINGTON, *behind SQUANTO, who has stood immovable, thrusts a handful of beads towards him. SQUANTO, with magnificent disdain, flings aside BILLINGTON'S arm, and steps forward*)

SQUANTO. Now I know you are true men. Much kindness you give Squanto. Squanto is poor Indian, but Squanto can repay. Squanto will be the white man's guide and friend. Always the white

man will remember his poor brother. (*The company gathers round SQUANTO. He takes from his tunic an ear of yellow corn and holds it aloft*) Squanto gives you Ewachim. We will save the white man. You tell of gold of Spain. This is gold of America. White man must set corn like my people or it comes to naught. My people have the secret. (*Short pause*) Spring is here. April smiles. The earth is warm. Soon little silver fish swim up the streams. (*He breaks off a kernel of corn*) One little grain of gold we take and two little silver fish. In the earth we hide them and we pray to Kiehtan to send water from on high. We men must keep the wolves away from the tempting fish. Soon up comes the green stalk and the silken ear, Ewachim and Life!

BRADFORD. My friend, thou hast saved us.

BREWSTER. Let the Lord have the praise, who is the high preserver of men.

JONES. (*Grasping CARVER by the hand in leave-taking*) You are instruments to break the ice for those who come after, and honor shall be yours to the end of the world. (*He lets go CARVER's hand, motions for the sailors to follow him, and starts out*)

CARVER. We will go with him, to the water's edge. (*GOVERNOR CARVER and his wife and all the company, except ELDER BREWSTER and MISTRESS BREWSTER, go out. As the GOVERNOR leaves the house, the chorus breaks forth into Luther's hymn, "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God." The music recedes. Before the last one has disappeared, MISTRESS BREWSTER begins to put the room to rights. She smooths the table-cover, which has become rumpled during the discussion. Meantime, as the light is growing dim, ELDER BREWSTER lays more logs on the fire. Quietly and in perfect trust, they*

go out hand in hand, leaving the door open. The firelight flames up and flickers across the table, shining bright upon the gold tooling of the Bible)

CURTAIN



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